

Office of Government Ethics

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forth in § 2638.303, he or she shall contact the Office of Government Ethics concerning the request before referring the request to the Office. If after such consultation the Office of Government Ethics determines that the request should be the subject of a formal advisory opinion, the designated agency ethics official shall notify the person making the request of that determination and request the person's permission to refer the request to the Office of Government Ethics.

(b) If the Director receives a request for an opinion which does not fulfill the criteria set forth in § 2638.303, he or she may:

(1) Furnish informational assistance to the person as provided in § 2638.305(a), or

(2) Refer the request to the appropriate designated agency ethics official.

(c) In all instances covered by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, a referral will not be made in the case of questions regarding possible future employment plans of an individual making the request unless he or she is first notified and gives his or her consent or the request itself indicates that such a referral may be made.

§ 2638.313 Agency opinions.

If the designated agency ethics official issues a written opinion concerning the application of 18 U.S.C. 202-209, he or she shall transmit a copy of that opinion to the Office of Government Ethics.

Subpart D—Correction of Executive Branch Agency Ethics Programs

SOURCE: 55 FR 1666, Jan. 18, 1990, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2638.401 In general.

The Director of the Office of Government Ethics has authority under subsections 402(b)(9) and 402(f)(1) of the Ethics in Government Act to order action to correct deficiencies in agency ethics programs. These procedures are intended to be used to correct deficiencies in agency ethics programs that are not being addressed ade-

quately by the agency. They are not intended to be used to deal with cases involving individual employees or former employees. See subpart E of this part. For purposes of this section, an agency ethics program shall include those matters that are the responsibility of agency heads and designated agency ethics officials under subpart B of this part and shall include the requirements under part 2634 of this chapter and part 735 of this title to establish public and nonpublic financial disclosure systems. In implementing these procedures, the Director may use any authority contained in the Ethics Act.

§ 2638.402 Corrective orders.

(a) *Notice.* Where the Director has information indicating that an agency ethics program is not in full compliance with the requirements set forth in applicable statutes or regulations, the Director may issue a Notice of Deficiency to the designated agency ethics official and request an agency report under paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) *Agency report.* Within such time as may be set forth in the Notice of Deficiency, the designated agency ethics official shall provide a written report to the Director that shall include relevant information about the agency's ethics program. The ethics official's report may include:

(1) Information establishing that there is no deficiency;

(2) An explanation of how any deficiency is being corrected; or

(3) A plan for correcting any deficiency within a reasonable period of time.

(c) *Director's determination.* The Director will make a determination based on the agency report.

(1) If the Director determines that there is no deficiency, the designated agency ethics official will be so notified.

(2) If the Director determines that appropriate steps are being taken or that the agency has presented an adequate plan for correcting the deficiency, the Director will so notify the designated agency ethics official and, in consultation with the designated

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agency ethics official, establish requirements for status reports, if necessary, and for notification when the deficiency has been corrected.

(3) If the Director determines that a deficiency is not being corrected, the Director will issue an Order under paragraph (d) of this section.

(d) *Orders.* An order issued by the Director will be addressed to the head of the agency with a copy to the designated agency ethics official and shall specify:

(1) The deficiency in the agency ethics program that requires correction;

(2) The basis upon which the Director has determined that a deficiency exists;

(3) The corrective action required to remedy the deficiency; and

(4) Any reporting requirements necessary to establish that corrective action has been accomplished.

§ 2638.403 Agency compliance.

Within such time as may be set forth in the order, the agency head shall file a report with the Director detailing the corrective action taken. If corrective action cannot be accomplished within that time, the agency head shall submit a plan of corrective action for approval by the Director providing for appropriate status reports and notification of compliance. In either case, if the agency report or plan is deemed satisfactory, the Director will so inform the agency head. If the agency report or plan is insufficient, but only in minor respects, the Director may inform the agency head of the adjustments needed to bring the report or plan into compliance and a timeframe therefor; otherwise, the procedures under § 2638.404 of this subpart will be invoked.

§ 2638.404 Report of noncompliance.

If the agency fails to comply with an order issued under § 2638.402(d), the Director shall:

(a) Notify the head of the agency of intent to furnish a report of noncompliance to the President and the Congress;

(b) Provide the agency 14 calendar days within which to furnish written comments for submission with the report of noncompliance; and

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(c) Report the agency's noncompliance to the President and to the Congress.

Subpart E—Corrective and Remedial Action in Cases Involving Individual Executive Agency Employees

SOURCE: 55 FR 1667, Jan. 18, 1990, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2638.501 In general.

(a) *Authority.* The Director of the Office of Government Ethics has authority under subsections 402(b)(9) and 402(f)(2) of the Act to order corrective and remedial action with respect to individual employees to bring about compliance with applicable ethics provisions. Nothing in this subpart relieves an agency of its primary responsibility to ensure compliance.

(b) *Definitions.* For the purpose of this subpart:

(1) *Ethics provision* includes any rule, regulation or executive order relating to conflicts of interest or standards of conduct in the executive branch. The term excludes any statute that is contained in title 18 of the United States Code or which imposes a criminal penalty as well as any statute made applicable to a specific agency that mandates or proscribes conduct not otherwise the subject of Governmentwide standards. It excludes any matter covered by sections 101 (k) and (m) of Executive Order 12674 that are within the cognizance of agency Inspectors General, the Office of Special Counsel or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

(2) *Employee* means any officer or employee, including a special Government employee, covered by any of the provisions contained in part 735 of this title.

(3) *Head of an agency*, in the case of an agency that is headed by a board, committee or other group of individuals, refers to the employee's appointing authority.

(4) *Corrective action* means any action necessary to remedy a violation of an ethics provision including, but not limited to, recusal, divestiture, termination of an activity, restitution, or